



VACCINE GAPS

P3 HEALTH GROUP // JULY 2017

GAPS REMAIN IN RECOMMENDED VACCINES FOR OLDER AMERICANS

Two thirds of older Americans have never had a shingles vaccine, and close to half haven't had a tetanus shot in the past 10 years, according to a data brief released today by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Rates of coverage with influenza and pneumococcal vaccine are better but gaps remain, report NCHS researchers Tina Norris, PhD, and colleagues.

In 2015, more than 47 million people in the United States were aged 65 years and older. Because older adults are at increased risk for complications from vaccine-preventable infections, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends influenza vaccination, two doses of pneumococcal vaccine, one dose of shingles vaccine, and a tetanus booster every 10 years.

An analysis of data from the 2015 National Health Interview Survey suggests room for improvement in coverage rates.

NCHS Data Brief Published online June 28, 2017.

Full Text: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db281.htm>

SOCIAL WELLNESS MONTH

Healthy relationships are a vital component of health. Social Wellness Month provides a great opportunity to discuss social and mental health with your patients. The health risks from being alone or isolated in one's life are comparable to the risks associated with cigarette smoking, blood pressure, and obesity.

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT

- People who have a strong social network tend to live longer.
- The heart and blood pressure of people with healthy relationships respond better to stress.
- Strong social networks are associated with a healthier endocrine system and healthier cardiovascular functioning.
- Healthy social networks enhance the immune system's ability to fight off infectious diseases.

TIPS FOR IMPROVING SOCIAL WELLNESS TO SHARE WITH YOUR PATIENTS

- Work out. Joining a gym or an exercise group allows you to meet new people while exercising.
- Take a walk with your pet. Starting a walking routine after dinner would not only give you another opportunity to be physically active, but it would also create more opportunities for you to meet your neighbors.
- Volunteer. Donate some of your time and hard work to a charity. You'll feel good about the cause, and you'll meet others with similar passions.
- Find others who share a hobby, such as hiking, painting, scrapbooking, running, etc.
- There are countless ways to grow your social network. Consider your interests and hobbies, and then pursue them. You're bound to find others with similar passions.

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MORE FOLLOW-UP NEEDED FOR ELDERLY 'OBSERVED' IN HOSPITALS

By Ronnie Cohen // June 30, 2017

(Reuters Health) - One in five patients covered by Medicare who were observed in a hospital but not admitted returned for a repeat visit within a month, researchers found.

Financial incentives and disincentives have led to an increase in the number of Medicare patients who spend up to 48 hours being observed in the hospital without being admitted. Today, 1.5 million Medicare beneficiaries are observed in hospitals each year, according to Dr. Kumar Dharmarajan, who led the study.

The new findings suggest that clinicians might need to focus more attention on caring for patients once they return home after being observed in the hospital, said Dharmarajan, a geriatrician and cardiologist at Yale School of Medicine in New Haven, Connecticut.

"These people are quite vulnerable after discharge," he said in a phone interview. "We need to think hard about helping improve transitions as people leave observation services."

"If one in five are coming back, there probably are opportunities to improve care for these patients," Dharmarajan said. For example, he said, protocols

should be in place to ensure that patients discharged from observation stays have follow-up appointments with their physicians.

"This is a group that's been relatively neglected from an outcomes perspective, and a group that's not going away," he said. "Could something different have been done in the hospital the first time, and could something different have been done after they left?"

Dr. Michael Ross, an emergency physician who oversees six observation units in Atlanta, Georgia, agreed that care coordination and, when possible, clinic visits within a week of observation stays can help reduce the number of patients who need to revisit hospitals after observation stays.

"They're sick patients, and anything that could be done to prevent return visits would be a step forward," he said in a phone interview. "I can't conclude from the paper that more could be done, but in principle, I could say there's always more that can be done with follow-up clinic visits and home care."

For the full article, please visit: <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/882319>



WORLD HEPATITIS DAY

World Hepatitis Day (WHD) takes place every year on 28 July and brings the world together under a single theme to raise awareness of the global burden of viral hepatitis and to influence real change. One of just four disease-specific global awareness days officially endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO), WHD unites patient organizations, governments, medical professionals, civil society, industry and the general public to boost the global profile of viral hepatitis.

WHY IS WORLD HEPATITIS DAY IMPORTANT?

Viral hepatitis is one of the leading causes of death globally, accounting for 1.34 million deaths per year – that's as many as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis or malaria. Together, hepatitis B virus and hepatitis C cause 80% of liver cancer cases in the world.

Viral hepatitis is not found in one location nor amongst one set of people; it is a truly global epidemic that can affect millions of

people without them even being aware. Currently, 90% of people living with hepatitis B and 80% living with hepatitis C are not aware of their status. This can result in the real possibility of developing fatal liver disease at some point in their lives and in some cases, unknowingly transmitting the infection to others.

With the availability of effective vaccines and treatments for hepatitis B and

a cure for hepatitis C, the elimination of viral hepatitis is achievable, but greater awareness and understanding of the disease and the risks is a must, as is access to cheaper diagnostics and treatment.

World Hepatitis Day presents an ideal opportunity: an opportunity to join together and raise the profile of viral hepatitis among the public, the world's media and on the global health agenda.

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